

# FACT SHEET

## GARCINIA CAMBOGIA



**Scientific Name:** Garcinia Cambogia

**Common Name:** Garcinia Cambogia, Brindleberry, Hydroxycitric Acid (HCA)

**Best Selling Brands:** Citrimax, Citrilean, Citrinat

**Historical Perspective:** Garcinia cambogia is a yellowish pumpkin shaped tropical tree fruit native to the country of India. In 1965, researchers identified HCA as the principle acid found in the fruit and rind of Garcinia cambogia.

**Common Uses:** According to Indian folk tradition, Garcinia cambogia has been described for such ailments as rheumatism and bowel complaints. The rind and extracts are often used as ingredients in Indian curry dishes and as condiments. Both Garcinia cambogia and extracted HCA are widely available in North America as a component in many commercial dietary supplements.

**Investigational Uses:** HCA, extracted from Garcinia cambogia, has been studied extensively in the animal model and found to suppress fatty acid synthesis and food intake, in addition to sparing the use of carbohydrate in the body while causing an increase in fat oxidation. Weight loss was also common within the animal model. Studies with human participants have thus far not shown the same results seen within the animal model. HCA has not demonstrated a suppression of hunger in humans, while weight loss seen with HCA supplementation was not significantly different than weight changes seen with placebo.

**Form(s):** The primary form of Garcinia is in tablet or capsule form. Garcinia cambogia is often added to dietary supplements containing several different herbs, and is often found exclusively with chromium picolinate in capsule form. The primary

component of Garcinia cambogia, HCA, is often found in powders, snack bars, and chewing gum.

**Common and/or Recommended Dosage:** The dosage of Garcinia cambogia is dependent upon the brand name purchased. Most manufacturer labels recommend consumption of 3-6 tablets per day of 500-1000 mg Garcinia cambogia per tab (standardized to yield 250-500 mg HCA) for adults. Tablets should be taken separately throughout the day within an hour of consuming food.

**Average Cost per Day:** \$0.16-\$0.22 per capsule, or approximately \$0.48-\$1.32 per day.

**Potential Side Effects:** Few adverse effects have been reported with Garcinia cambogia. A study conducted by St Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital at Columbia University found that symptoms noted by patients taking Garcinia cambogia were not significantly different than those individuals consuming a placebo. The most common reported events included headaches, upper respiratory, or gastrointestinal symptoms.

**Food-Medication Interactions:** There are no known food-medication interactions associated with the use of Garcinia cambogia. However, patients taking oral hypoglycemic agents are cautioned against using Garcinia cambogia due to the possibility of exacerbating the action of their hypoglycemic medications.

**Contraindications:** Individuals diagnosed with Diabetes mellitus should use extreme caution in taking Garcinia cambogia/HCA due to its glycemic action. Individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementia syndromes should avoid using HCA due to the possibility of forming acetylcholine in the brain. Pregnant and lactating women should also avoid using any supplements containing Garcinia cambogia/HCA.

**Research Data on Safety and Efficacy:** Pending additional research, Garcinia cambogia and HCA are viewed as safe and nontoxic for most healthy adult individuals. Unlike many herbal weight loss supplements, Garcinia cambogia does not stimulate the central nervous system in order to burn calories. However, there have been no long-term studies investigating Garcinia cambogia within the human model.

**Bottom Line:** Present research indicates there is no conclusive evidence that Garcinia cambogia or HCA affects any significant changes in weight. Individuals are cautioned towards the use of any dietary supplement, and should consult their health care provider if they are considering using Garcinia cambogia.

**References:**

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